

increased irrigation and seasonal requirements of these States. UP is also being provided assistance of about 60 MW from the surplus power of Eastern Region. Further, action is being taken pending completion of the line for terminating 400 KV Biharsharif-Allahabad D/C line at Sarnath sub-station of UPPCL by April, 2001 which will enhance the export of surplus power from Eastern Region to Northern Region from existing 60 MW to 350-500 MW. Other measures such as Renovation, Modernisation and Upgrading of old and inefficient generating units, reduction of T&D losses, installation of shunt capacitors etc. have also been taken to improve the power situation in the Northern Region. Capacity addition of 11736 MW and 10573 MW has also been programmed in Northern Region in Xth and XIth Plan periods, respectively. In the NCT of Delhi, DVB is executing Pragati CCGT (330 MW) project. The expected date of commissioning of 1st Unit of this plant in January, 2002, 2nd Unit in March, 2002 and complete plant by November, 2002. In addition, Delhi will also be entitled for a share of power from the new Central Sector Power Stations envisaged during Xth and XIth Plans in the Northern Region.

Seizure of sophisticated communicating gadgets from prisoners in Tihar Jail

* 180. SHRI PARMESHWAR KUMAR AGARWALLA: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that four SIM cards, a sophisticated communicating gadget, were seized from prisoners cell in the high security Tihar Jail in violation of all security rules of this jail;

(b) if so, the details of officials involved and the action to be taken against them; and

(c) the action proposed to be taken to strengthen the security arrangement to avoid such lapses in future?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI CHENNAMANENIVIDYA SAGAR RAO): (a) and (b) In the course of a surprise search conducted by the Prison Authorities on 7th November, 2000 in Jail No. 4 of the Central Jail, Tihar, some prohibited articles including two sockets and a SIM Card were recovered from the Cell of a prisoner. The SIM Card was found to be concealed in a transistor kept in the Cell. Though the efforts were made to trace the Cell Phone, it could not be located. However, the

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police investigation into this case indicated that a telephone installed at the official residence of a driver of the jail was being contacted with the help of the seized SIM Card. The delinquent driver has been served with Show Cause Notice for initiating disciplinary proceedings against him.

(c) The steps taken by the Jail Administration to ensure that the prohibited articles are not passed inside the Jail include searching and frisking of the staff and visitors before entering and leaving the Jail premises; carrying out of surprise searches under the supervision of senior officers; and use of sophisticated gadgets like metal detectors, deep search metal detectors and Cell Phone detectors by the frisking team to detect the prohibited articles.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO UNSTARRED QUESTIONS

Privatisation of coal industry

1154. PROF. RAM DEO BHANDARY: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) the present policy in regard to mining and exploration of coal in the country;

(b) whether it is a fact that coal industry has been opened for private participation;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether it is a fact that there is wide criticism from workers' unions in this regard;

(e) if so, whether Government propose to reconsider the issue of privatisation of coal industry in the country; and

(f) if not, the reasons thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI SYED

SHAHNAWAZ HUSSAIN): (a) to (c) Private coal mines were nationalized in 1972 and 1973 in order to augment coal production in the country by adopting advanced mining technology. In 1993, private sector participation in coal mining was allowed by allowing coal mining for captive use by companies engaged in production of iron & steel, power generation and washing of coal obtained from a mine. Later on, companies engaged in cement production were also allowed coal mining for their captive use.